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LONDON LETTER.

London, Dec. 9, 1908.

The event of last week was the sale at Sotheby's of the famous library of Lord Amherst of Hackney. A sensation was caused by the withdrawal of the whole series of fifteen Caxtons, which include the first work printed at the Westminster press, "Dictes or Sayings of the Philosophers," and also the first work printed in the English language, "Recueil of the Historyes of Troye." These were bought by a collector on the eve of the sale, and although no announcement has been made as to the identity of the buyer, it is generally understood that they were acquired for Mr. Pierpont Morgan. I hear that the price paid was £75,000.

Among the best prices at the auction were £2,000 for the Apocalypse from the Block Bible printed in Holland in 1455, this sum being four times the price of the same at the Crawford sale in 1887. For the first volume of the famous Mazarin Bible Mr. Quaritch paid £2,050; while King Charles I's copy of the celebrated Cambridge Bible in elaborate royal binding made £1,000.

At the dispersal of the Jaques Blumenthal collection of old English silver at Christie's on Thursday Messrs. Crichton paid 300s. per ounce for a William III trencher salt-cellar 1696; 270s. per ounce for a George I dredger 1723, and 215s. per ounce for a Charles II castor 1682.

CHICAGO.

A group of fifteen portraits by Wilhelm Funk shown in the Reinhardt Galleries has met with enthusiastic praise. It is undoubtedly the best "one man" portrait exhibition ever shown in this city. A certain dignity and naturalness of pose, grace of expression in hands and countenance characterize these portraits of well-known New York men and women, which are also marked by great simplicity. That of Miss Nora Harris, a study in black, besides its truth, has a certain decorative elegance. Portraits of Frank Jay Gould, of George McAneny, of J. L. Prince are strongly executed. Four portraits of young children are very charming; that of little Dorothea Gould being especially quaint and interesting.

A special exhibition of the oils of Harry Roseland recently occupied the chief gallery of Marshall Field & Co. There were 23 in all. The entire group showed phases of southern plantation life, glimpses of the cotton fields, interiors with expressive groups. A study called "Was It for the Best," two aged negroes gazing at a portrait of Lincoln, had much pathos. Roseland's exhibition was well liked and is followed in the same gallery by a Stephen Parrish show to continue until Dec. 26.

OBITUARY.

Henry Deakin, the art dealer of Chicago, died suddenly there Dec. 10, after an operation for appendicitis. Previous to his career in this country Mr. Deakin lived for many years in Yokohama, Japan, where he was at one time associated with Sir Edwin Arnold. He was said to have been the first man to bring to this country the works of Makurza Kozan and the enamel work of the Japanese artist Namikawa.

While he was in Japan Mr. Deakin became interested in the native pearl fisheries and retained his interests when he came to America. Until he took the native American pearl fisheries in hand few persons in the United States were aware that valuable pearls were to be found in Wisconsin.

THE BROWN PICTURE CLUB.

The Brown Picture Club was organized by the AMERICAN ART NEWS last year, has finished its first year, and the pictures painted by Prof. Bolton Coit Brown have been assigned to the members of the Club, all of whom express themselves as well pleased with the result of their membership and subscription. It will be remembered that the AMERICAN ART NEWS took up Prof. Brown's suggestion of a co-operative picture club and organized such a club for him on a mutual subscription basis. Each member of the Club paid \$80, in regular installments, and this was turned over to Prof. Brown, who thus received a fairly regular income while he was painting his pictures.

These were produced in his studio at Woodstock, Ulster Co., N. Y., are for the most part painted in a low color key in soft tones, and are filled with that sympathy with nature which is the chief characteristic of the artist's work.

Bolton Coit Brown.
An Appreciation by Leon Dabo.

If the tendency of modern landscape painting were to be summed up in a short sentence it would be "Light and atmosphere," and it is light and atmosphere above all that Mr. Brown expresses, and this light is embodied in visions of the loveliest color—color that is ever shifting, radiant and ambient in its pristine beauty. Bolton Coit Brown is one of a band of younger American painters who are the advance guard of a revolt against formalistic and academic teachings, and who seek to express their own ideas of beauty, of nature, of the charm and music of color in a personal way, and this individual rendering of the mysteries of nature and beauty is the strength of the modern American landscape tendency.

The series of Mr. Brown's landscapes lately shown at his studio place him among the masters of his craft. Several of his nocturnes were overpowering in their exquisite emotional value. The California landscapes—as well as the Catskills, employing a full color scale, and always redolent with light, and drawn in a strong virile manner—place Mr. Brown in the very front rank of our landscape painters. The most impressive, perhaps, was a group of two figures, nude, bathing in the moonlight.

BARNARD TO FINISH WORK.

The State of Pennsylvania has arranged with George Gray Barnard, the sculptor, through the assistance of some New York friends of the sculptor, to finish and install in a year or so, the great groups of statuary that are to adorn the new entrance of the State's new Capital at Harrisburg.

The aid extended to Barnard consists of sufficient money to cancel his \$20,000 bond and to pay his debts to workmen in France and Italy, so that the plaster casts may be released and the marble purchased to carve the great ideals.

This money was supplied, it is announced, by Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, Robert C. Ogden, Albert Shaw, Walter H. Page, Prof. E. R. A. Seligman, F. E. Bourne and Anna M. Carpenter, all of New York. It has been invested in a mortgage on land, so that the committee is secured and at the same time can exercise certain supervisory power delegated to it by the State.

Barnard will leave at once for Carrara, Italy, where he will execute his groups. Simultaneously with the Barnard announcement comes the news that the State Board of Public Grounds and Buildings had accepted a proposition from Edwin A. Abbey to donate to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania ten mural paintings of various sizes, to be placed in the hall of the House of Representatives, to complete his allegorical scheme of decoration for the Capitol.

IMPORTANT ART SALES.

AMHERST SALE, LONDON.

Big prices were realized at the sale by auction of Lord Amherst's collection of tapestry, French furniture and enamels, Dec. 11. The pick of the tapestry, an eight-panel set of old Gobelins, representing episodes of the military career of Louis XIV., brought \$65,000; a 16th century enamel plaque, representing the death of the Virgin Mary, brought \$38,000, and a suite of Louis XV. furniture, two settees and 12 chairs, also sold for \$38,000. The total amount realized is nearly \$200,000.

It is understood that the eight panels of tapestry were bought for a private collector, who, as is customary, is reported to be J. Pierpont Morgan.

The sale of Amherst's tapestries, limoges, enamels and other objects of art was continued at Christie's, Dec. 12. Nattier's "Portrait of a Lady" fetched 2,800 guineas. A portrait of the Marquise De Rumilly was sold for 2,940 guineas.

KADOYAMA SALE.

At the Fifth Avenue Auction Rooms, No. 333 Fourth avenue, Japanese and Chinese works belonging to R. Kadoyama were sold Dec. 10, 11 and 12. A pink crystal quartz vase brought \$350 from R. W. Voorhees. A white jade vase went to Mr. Lanther for \$220. He also bought, for \$180, a rose-colored crystal vase. A rose-colored crystal quartz altar set was obtained by G. Brown for \$140, and R. W. Voorhees paid 150 for a large moss green jade vase.

At the closing session, Dec. 12, a hard porcelain galipot of milky texture of the Kien-lung period brought the highest price, \$320. A six-fold palace screen, dated early eighteenth century, was sold for \$260, while a Mongolian rug with a fawn center brought \$145. The total sum received for the entire sale was \$16,481.

RHOADES SALE.

Effects of John V. A. Rhoades, adjudged an incompetent, were sold at the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries, Dec. 9, 10 and 11. A number of autograph letters from well-known persons were bought by Harry A. Cass at prices ranging from \$3 to \$5 each.

One hundred and ten oil paintings sold to close the estate of Mrs. S. Newton Smith and N. Porter were offered, and brought \$4,123.50. The highest price was paid by W. W. Bagley, \$305, for "A Chance Meeting," by R. Goubie. "The Return from Market," by D. G. Strobil, went for \$112.50 to Mr. Rosenberg. J. G. Tyler's "The Bursting Tide" brought \$57.50.

The final session, Dec. 11, brought a total of \$21,851, making the grand total for the three days \$36,220. The sale in the evening of the W. Cole Dudley library showed a total of \$8,968.50.

An Oriental pearl pendant, studded with diamonds, brought \$4,000—the highest price at the afternoon sale. It was bought after some spirited bidding by S. W. Weyler. Edward Lauterbach and Olga Nethersole were among the bidders. W. Carlton paid \$300 for two Louis XVI. fans, a Vernis Martin fan and another entitled "The Love Letter." C. B. Alexander paid \$302 for "The Lovers," a Louis XVI. gold and agate oblong bonbonniere.

At the evening sale of the Dudley library \$700 was paid for thirty-two volumes of Bulwer Lytton's works, printed on Japan vellum. Forty volumes of what is said to be the finest edition of Washington Irving's works ever made was sold to C. Shaw for \$300.

YERKES SALE POSTPONED.

At the request of Corporation Counsel Pendleton the foreclosure sale of the site and building of that part of the Yerkes Art Gallery, which fronts on Fifth avenue has been put off to December 23. The property had been mortgaged to the Mutual Life Insurance Company for \$225,000.

The Corporation Counsel expressed the hope that some one would pay up the mortgage and settle with Mrs. Yerkes, who may contest this provision of the will. Such a course would insure the passage of the gallery to the city at an early date.

BLACKBORNE LACES UNSOLD.

At the final sale of the Vitall Benguiat collection of laces and old textiles Dec. 12, the Blackburne collection of laces—645 specimens—brought not a single bid. The upset price had been set at \$20,000, and the laces were to be sold as one lot.

Mr. Benguiat, it is said, will wait two months for a museum purchaser. The total for the three days' sale was \$20,730.

PARIS LETTER.

Paris, November 9, 1908.

American artists carried away all the honors at the exhibition this week of the Societe Internationale, where they found themselves in competition with Spain, Austria and Italy, as well as France.

Hubbell's interiors and MacCameron's popular types won the highest praise, which was shared by Frieske, who contributed a number of decorative landscapes, and by Bunny and Harrison. With these exceptions the exhibition was far below the average. It has the general appearance of a collection of Christmas covers for popular magazines.

Augustus Rodin is very sick at his home in Meudon, and has been unable to go to his studio in the Rue de l'Universite for the past week. The Whistler monument is at present unfinished, and several other big pieces of work need many more touches before they can leave the workshop.

In spite of his advanced age of 68 years, Rodin has been in the habit of working in his studio from early morning until late afternoon. His present condition is alarming his friends.

WASHINGTON.

The forty-second annual convention of the American Institute of Architects was held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The evening session of the Institute took place at the Corcoran Gallery on Tuesday. This was a memorial meeting in appreciation of the late Augustus St. Gaudens, whose sculptural works are now on exhibition in the lower atrium of the gallery. The receiving party were Mes. Jusserand, James Bryce, Robert Bacon, Cass Gilbert, and Glenn Brown.

Letters were read from art societies in France, Great Britain, Germany, and Italy, and short addresses made by Hon. Elihu Root, Secretary of State; Baron Mayer des Planches, Italian ambassador; M. J. J. Jusserand, French ambassador; Joaquim Nabuco, Brazilian ambassador; Hon. James Bryce, British ambassador; Baron Takahira, Japanese ambassador, and by Senor Godoy, charge d'affaires of Mexico.

The Robert Reid collection of paintings on exhibition through December 23, in the studio of F. D. Millet, Forest Hall, attracts art lovers. The collection, thirty-four in number, represents three years' work of the artist, the scenes being mostly of New England.

BOSTON.

There is talk of a popular subscription to purchase George Grey Barnard's "Hewer" for erection in Boston. Worse things, of course, have been exposed to the changeable New England climate. Mr. Barnard is an energetic sculptor whom a great many people appreciate, as is shown by the number of illustrated articles about him which are appearing in all the periodicals. He has, in fact, become as inevitable to the editorial mind, as President Roosevelt or Governor Hughes, and it is a poor little laudographer (the hybrid comes to us from London) who cannot turn out a neat appreciation of this brilliant exponent of American robustness. True, the attitude of fellow craftsmen is not always exactly cordial, but perhaps professional jealousy explains that. Boston, anyway, needs good sculpture.